Smithsonian E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NBS Deliverable NE;

whom I was working. Before I left, this medley contained so much Bella Coola that it was unintelligible to white people who knew Chinook alone.

Activities in the canneries would have interfered seriously with my work during the summer of 1922 if two men had not been confined to the village, Captain Schooner owing to an injured wrist, and Jim Pollard by the illness of his wife. These two men were willing to work half a day apiece without journey. Each was intensely proud of the traditions of his people and, realizing that their culture was passing away, was glad to assist in making it permanent in writing. An intimacy sprang up between Captain Schooner (see Plate 3) and myself culminating in my adoption, a circumstance which established my position in the community. In this way I was enabled to collect a large amount of material before July when it was necessary for me to leave for the east.

In September, 1923, when I returned to Bella Coola, I found that Captain Schooner had died a few months before, regretted alike by white men and Indians. With the aid of others with whom I had made contact it was possible to elicit much new information, as well as to clear up many obscure points. The previous summer I had been so overwhelmed with material that I had no time to culture it in the field and certain gaps only became apparent after a year's study. The men were so busy hunting and laying in stocks of fire-wood, however, that I found it difficult to arrange regular hours of work. In this way a little compared with the initial difficulties of my first trip. In October, when the Bella Coola began to prepare for the winter dances, they had to appoint a successor to Captain Schooner, who had played a leading part in their production. Having been adopted by him, it was suggested that I take his place, a proposition which I readily accepted. This admitted me to the ranks of the old men, and I imagine that my interest encouraged them to hold more ceremonials than they had done for several years. In former times, a number of the older men used to devote much time and thought to the composing, re-

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

membering, and rendering of songs; in 1923 it was found that Jim Pollard (see Plate 4) alone had a sufficiently accurate memory to act as announcer. As more and more men wished to perform, he found himself unable to keep the texts in order, and asked me to join the choir as prompter. I held this position for the rest of the winter, taking a full part in every ceremony. Although the old customs had broken down enormously, this actual participation enabled me to understand the winter dances in a manner impossible from mere description. Later on, phonographic records were made of many of the songs used, thus preserving specimens of the fast disappearing music.

My intimate association with the Bella Coola enabled me to collect the material here presented which, having been verified and reverified, I have every reason to believe is correct. Nevertheless, it has one serious defect owing to the lack of acuteness of my ear. I found it almost impossible to differentiate certain sounds; in fact, I sometimes recorded the same word with different spellings. Consequently, I cannot guarantee the accuracy of the native terms used in this monograph. Moreover, I was entirely unable to analyze proper names, which would have been of great value in understanding the attributes of supernatural beings.

When writing up field notes, the realization of my own inefficiency in the recording of sounds tempted me to rely upon the spelling of Boas whenever possible. After considerable hesitation, I rejected this course for the following reason. Ethnological work falls into two categories, descriptive and comparative. This monograph is of the former type, based on actual work in the field and the inclusion of any material from another source would destroy its originality. I believe that a descriptive work should consist exclusively of the author's own research, and I have adhered to this principle in spite of the advantages which would have followed the use of Boas' linguistic terms. For the same reason no attempt has been made to compare the customs and beliefs of the Bella Coola with those of other tribes, although this would undoubtedly have shed

2:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
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APPENDIX 9

STRING FIGURES

THE only form of pastime which it was practical to investigate in any detail was the construction of string figures. These seem to have no ceremonial or religious significance; they are made for recreation only, and it was found easy to learn a number while paving the way for other kinds of research. In fact, interest in them was one of the ways in which the writer became friends with a number of Bella Coola. As is to be expected, some individuals are more proficient in constructing complicated string figures than others, the old women being particularly adept. During the long delays which occur in all the dances it is a common sight to see an old crone teaching a group of young girls the figures which she herself learned when young. Some men remember a number from childhood, but the making of designs with string is regarded as more fitting for girls and women. Songs accompany many of the figures, and the singing of these is considered an essential part of the construction. It was stated that many more figures were known long ago; in fact, several of those here recorded were only obtained after repeated efforts on the part of an old woman to reconstruct those which she had been shown when a child. No attempt was made to learn all the Bella Coola figures; a larger number could doubtless have been collected, but those here described are the ones most commonly made.

The nomenclature used is that described by Miss Haddon,[1] in itself following the method used by Rivers and Haddon. It will be assumed that the reader is familiar with this, including the meaning of the terms, "Opening A," "Position I," and "Reverse." A string about four feet long will be found most convenient for making the Bella Coola figures.

1. A SALMON-TRAP

Double the loop; two strands now take the place of the usual one, but these will be referred to as a single string or loop. The figure can be made equally well with a string one-half the usual length.

Place string as a simple loop over left thumb and index finger and the right hand.

With right index finger hook down the string passing dorsally across left thumb and index finger and draw out to right, allowing right hand loop to slip over this hooked-down string.

[1] A. Haddon, *Cat's Cradle from Many Lands* (London, 1911).